

Ellington Historical Society
&
Nellie McKnight Museum
Spring 2020 Newsletter





February Visitors: Ms. Katharine Lanz's Ceramic Classes.

One of the highlights to start our year, in our pre-COVID-19 era, was a visit by Ms. Lanz's Ellington High School Ceramic Classes. On February 23 and 24, students hiked down Maple Street, stopped for a brief visit with First Selectman, Lori Spielman, then made their way over to our Nellie McKnight Museum. February winds died down, and springlike weather provided the students near perfect conditions for their visit.

President, Mark Maciolek and Curator, Nancy Long gave a brief overview of the history behind the Nellie McKnight Museum, and then students were allowed to roam and explore the entire museum. Jim Long provided guidance and helped navigate the upstairs as Nancy showcased how Nellie's 19th Century weaving loom worked.

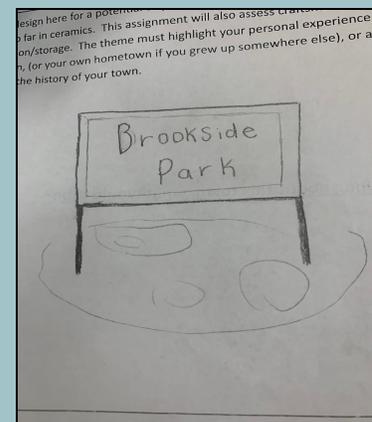
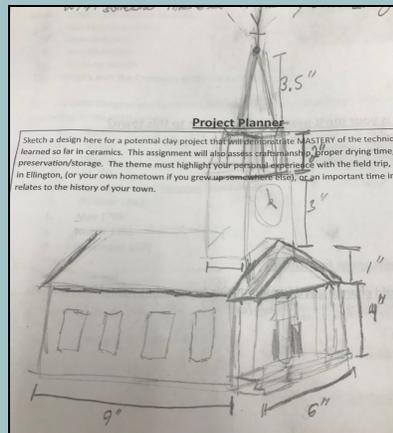
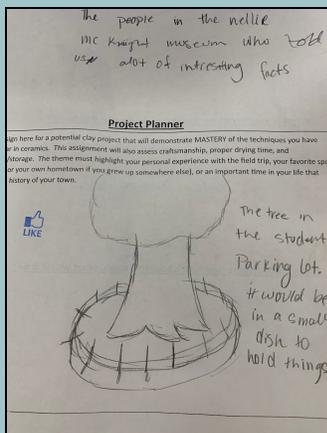
Nearly 100 students participated, and you are able to see their outing here: [▶ Ellington Nellie Trip 1.mp4](#) Having our young adults visit, all for the very first time, and watch their enthusiasm for Ellington's history, brings great pleasure and hope for our future. We have given

each member of Ms. Lanz's classes Honorary Membership, in hopes they will be beacons of stewardship.

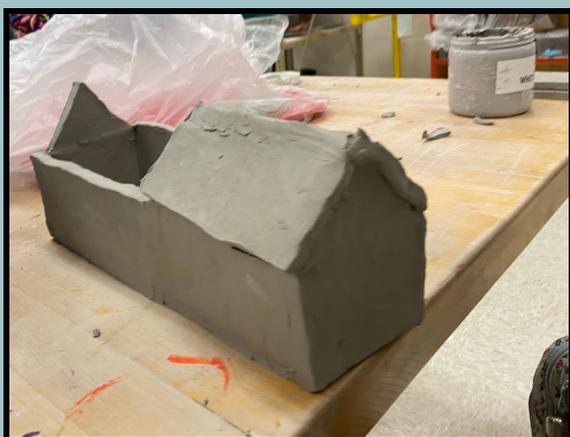


Following their visit, students made their way down Main Street before ending by meeting Library Director, Susan Philips at the Hall Memorial Library. Students were impressed with the classical architecture, and most had never been inside the original building until that day.

This memorable learning experience launched the creative planning process for what would become the final ceramic project before distance learning began.

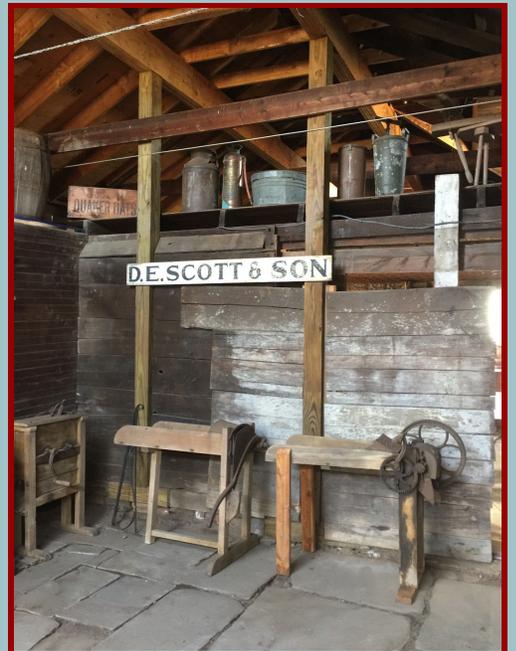


Students completed (and some partially completed) fantastic clay pieces to represent their experiences and personal connection to their hometown. Unfortunately, the installation of students' hard work would have been displayed at Hall Memorial Library during the annual student art exhibition; which has been postponed indefinitely.



New Barn Exhibit

We would like to thank the many volunteers who came out on a blustery Saturday morning to help clean out Nellie's old barn. The new space will be used for a future exhibit and display of not only early 19th Century equipment, but showcase some of the incredibly hard working families that developed Ellington into the beautiful town it is today.



If you have any [small] equipment, old farm hoes, shovels, rakes, boxes, barrels, etc., Please consider donating them: We'd love to have them preserved for future generations to appreciate.



We would also like to thank [Kloter Farms](#), for their generous donation and use of one of their classic farm sheds, to help house items for the next few weeks.

An Ellington Historical Society First



Due to the COVID-19 Virus, we did not hold our March 26th meeting at the Hall Memorial Library (our beautiful library has been closed for the past several days...) Instead, nine members participated in our very first online, Internet, Zoom meeting! It may not seem too exciting at this present time, but hopefully by recognizing it as our “first,” we will be able to document and keep this information for future generations. Perhaps 100 years from now Ellington residents and Ellington Historical Society members will be asking, “What’s a Zoom?” or even “What’s an Internet?”



Nellie McKnight Museum

Preservation Project 2020

As you can see, Ellington Historical Society's Nellie McKnight Museum is in need of desperate repair and restoration. Built in 1812, Nellie's home has stood the test of time and enjoyed the center of attention on Main Street for just over 200 years. Historic homes need attention and proper maintenance in order to survive, ensuring they will be here for future generations to come. Additional information is forthcoming.



Our membership and Executive Board of Directors are fully aware of the current climate, due to the Coronavirus, not only in Ellington but throughout our Nation and beyond. These are very difficult times, people are out of work, and families have been devastated with loss beyond measure. Therefore, we will do our best, try to utilize the assets we have, and hope donations begin to trickle in. Vice President, Diane Trueb has spent countless hours writing two grant proposals; one for the Barn Exhibit and the other for restoring the front porch. We are in competition with literally dozens and dozens of other museums around the state. Fundraising ideas forthcoming.

Nellie's Time Capsule 2020

One of our Ellington Historical Society members had a wonderful suggestion to help capture, preserve, and share the current mood and tone of our beautiful town of Ellington during this unprecedented time in our history: A Nellie McKnight 2020 Time Capsule.

Nellie's Time Capsule is open to all Ellington residents and Ellington Historical Society members from across the country. People of all ages are welcome to write a reflection of what it has been like to live during these past weeks and months. What are your greatest fears, challenges, and hardships? What have you learned about yourself? Others? How has this changed you as a person? Typed or cursive anyone?

We also will be looking for interesting newspaper headings: Journal Inquirer, Hartford Courant, Boston Globe, or New York Times front pages. Photos, drawings, etc. Whatever moves you.

All the items will be copied or scanned (you can sign the documents or you may remain anonymous. We would love to have the opportunity to share the pieces and reflections later this summer or early fall; as part of our **Nellie's Back Porch Celebrations**, before stored in Nellie's attic.

You may mail the reflection to

Nellie McKnight's Time Capsule

% Ellington Historical Society

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Or by email: ellingtonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

We hope you follow us on social media, you'll find us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). Please help spread the word about joining the Ellington Historical Society and check out the new look to our new website at www.ellingtonhistsoc.org. We hope to see you all at the opening of our farm exhibit when it is safe to hold public gatherings.

Stay safe,

Mark Maciolek

President Ellington Historical Society